



# News Release

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## Arsonist Arrested in Connection with a Spree of Kaplan Fires

**Kaplan, LA-** State Fire Marshal H. “Butch” Browning and Kaplan Chief of Police Boyd Adams announced today the early morning arrest of a man charged with being responsible for setting 12 fires over the past two years including a fire at the vacant Kaplan Rice Mill.

The Kaplan Fire Department responded at 2:16 this morning to a vacant residential fire located at 912 West 10<sup>th</sup> Street. The home was completely consumed in flames. Firefighters quickly extinguished the fire before it spread to other structures.

The State Fire Marshal’s Office, Kaplan Police Department and the Vermilion Parish Sheriff’s Office have over the past nine months been operating a special task force to investigate a series of suspicious fires dating back to 2007. These fires have primarily involved vacant and older unused buildings in the city. Immediately upon report of this morning’s fire the task force was dispatched and a pre-determined operational plan was executed to quickly identify suspects. Valuable evidence was obtained that led to the arrest of Felician Joseph “Fish” Primeaux (dob. 3-24-56) He has been charged with 12 counts of simple arson. He is accused of setting fires to nine buildings; three buildings were actually set multiple times. One fire occurred at the Kaplan Rice Mill and destroyed the commercial structure. Mr. Primeaux was booked into the Vermilion Parish Jail and is being held on a \$300,000.00 bond.

The partnership of this team was credited for the successful arrests of the person believed to be responsible for this rash of dangerous fires. State Fire Marshal Browning stated, “I commend Chief Boyd Adams and Sheriff Michael Couvillon for their full support and highly professional personnel who played the critical role of sticking with this investigation as we have now solved the mystery. This investigation had the personal involvement of Senator Jonathan Perry; he ensured all the state’s resources were committed. The people of Kaplan should be proud of its public officials for their passion and dedication.”



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